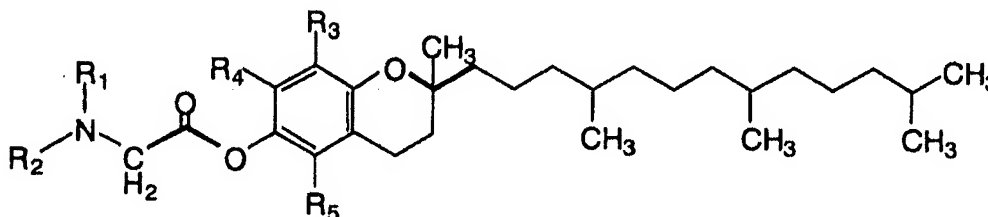


AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (canceled).
2. (currently amended): ~~The A~~ whitening cosmetic composition ~~according to Claim 1,~~ wherein the comprising a tocopherol alkylglycine ester and/or a salt thereof, said ester is being a compound represented by a formula (1) described below:



wherein R₁ and R₂ independently represent the same or different lower a straight chain or branched alkyl group having 1 to 6 carbons or a hydrogen atom; and R₃, R₄, and R₅ independently represent a hydrogen atom or a methyl group; with the proviso that R₁ and R₂ do not represent a hydrogen atom at the same time, and that R₃, R₄, and R₅ do not represent methyl at the same time.

3. (currently amended): The whitening cosmetic composition according to Claim ~~1~~ 2, wherein the tocopherol alkylglycine ester is at least one compound selected from ~~an α-tocopherol alkylglycine ester~~, a γ-tocopherol alkylglycine ester, and a δ-tocopherol alkylglycine ester.

4. (canceled).
5. (canceled).
6. (canceled).

7. (currently amended): The whitening cosmetic composition according to Claim-~~1~~2, characterized in that the tocopherol alkylglycine ester is a γ -tocopherol alkylglycine ester.

8. (original): The whitening cosmetic composition according to Claim 7, characterized in that the γ -tocopherol alkylglycine ester is a d- γ -tocopherol alkylglycine ester.

9. (currently amended): The whitening cosmetic composition according to Claim-~~1~~2, characterized in that the tocopherol alkylglycine ester is a δ -tocopherol alkylglycine ester.

10. (original): The whitening cosmetic composition according to Claim 9, characterized in that the δ -tocopherol alkylglycine ester is a d- δ -tocopherol alkylglycine ester.

11. (currently amended): The whitening cosmetic composition according to Claim-~~1~~2, characterized in that the tocopherol alkylglycine ester is tocopherol dimethylglycine ester.

12. (currently amended): The whitening cosmetic composition according to Claim-~~1~~2, characterized in that the salt of a tocopherol alkylglycine ester is a salt of an organic acid or an inorganic acid.

13. (original): The whitening cosmetic composition according to Claim 12, wherein the salt of a tocopherol alkylglycine ester is hydrochloride.

14. (currently amended): The whitening cosmetic composition according to Claim-~~1~~2, wherein an added amount of the tocopherol alkylglycine ester and/or the salt thereof ranges from 0.1 to 10% by mass.

15. (previously presented): A method for preventing or eliminating pigmentation of the skin, comprising preventing or eliminating pigmentation of the skin with a tocopherol alkylglycine ester and/or a salt thereof.

16. (previously presented): A method of using a tocopherol alkylglycine ester and/or a salt thereof, comprising applying a composition containing a tocopherol alkylglycine ester and/or a salt thereof for preventing or eliminating pigmentation of the skin.

17. (previously presented): A method of using a tocopherol alkylglycine ester and/or a salt thereof comprising preparing a pharmaceutical agent with a tocopherol alkylglycine ester and/or a salt thereof for use in preventing or eliminating pigmentation of the skin.